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JUDICIARY EXPLORING AI TOOLS, SAYS CJI-DESIGNATE SURYA KANT

Justice Surya Kant said on Sunday the judiciary has begun exploring AI-based tools with a view that tech must augment, not replace, the human mind

'HUMANITY GIVES JUSTICE ITS MORAL CORE'

The Chief Justice of India-designate emphasised that technology must be harnessed as a tool, without surrendering the humanity that gives justice its moral core. Kant said, "The law, after all, is not a mere algorithm. It is a reflection of human conscience, shaped by empathy, moral reasoning, and an understanding of context that machines cannot replicate"

AI CAN HELP IMPROVE JUSTICE DELIVERY: KANT

- Justice Kant said AI-based tools are being considered for research, transcription and data analytics. He added that they could help improve efficiency and analytical precision in the delivery of justice
- He was speaking at the valedictory function of the Sixth Full Meeting of the Standing International Forum of Commercial Courts in Delhi

Nov 24

WHEN JUSTICE SURYA KANT WILL TAKE CHARGE AS THE 53RD CJI

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

All eyes on Bihar women voters as final phase campaigning winds up

In NDA, BJP is contesting 53 seats, JD(U) 44, while INDIA bloc's RJD is up on 72, Cong 37

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR AND RAMASHANKAR
@ New Delhi/Patna

CAMPAIGNING for the second and final phase of the Bihar Assembly elections concluded on Sunday evening, capping nearly a month of intense canvassing and clamorous exchanges between the ruling NDA and the opposition Mahagathbandhan. Polling will take place on November 11 across 122 constituencies in 20 districts, marking the decisive round of a high-stakes contest.

The first phase on November 6 saw a record voter turnout of 65.08 percent, the highest in the state's history, with women outnumbering men at poll booths. The turnout of women voters in this phase may well decide whether, as many put it, "*Rajnitik badlav ki hawa chali ya nahi* (if a political wind of change has blown)."

Among key seats going to polls in this phase are Chakai, from where JD(U) minister Sumit Kumar Singh is seeking re-election, BJP MLA Shreyasi Singh's Jamui, JD(U) minister Leshi Singh's Dhamdaha, and BJP minister Neeraj Kumar Singh's Chhatapur.

In the second and final phase of Bihar Assembly elections, all eyes are on women voters—1.74 crore of them out of 3.70 crore total electors—are expected to play a crucial role in shaping the outcome.

"Women voters have certainly become a segment that could determine the fortunes of both the ruling NDA and the opposition Mahagathbandhan (MGB)," said Ravi K Sinha, a Patna-based political analyst.

Both alliances have aggressively courted women voters. Nitish Kumar has leaned on welfare schemes such as the Mukhyamantri Mahila Rojgar Yojana, under which ₹10,000 was directly credited to over two crore women to promote financial independence.

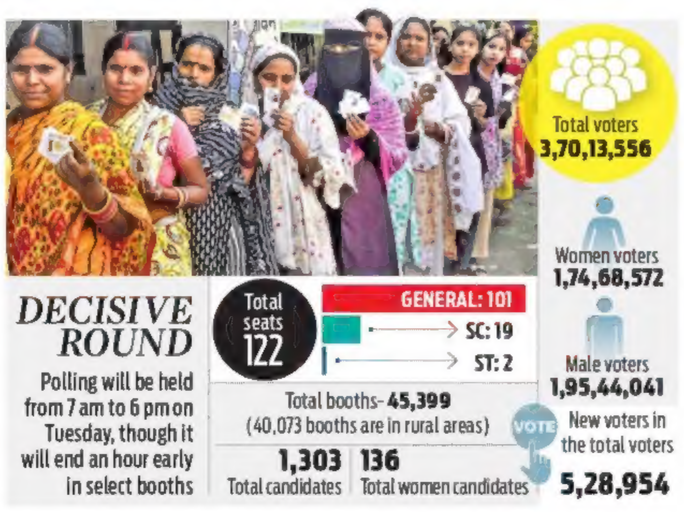
During his 71 rallies, the chief minister framed his campaign around women's empowerment and safety, contrasting his record with the "Jungle Raj" years under the RJD.

Tejashwi Yadav's campaigns sought to link women's vote with the twin concerns of unemployment and rising prices. Women account for nearly 47% of Bihar's electorate.

According to Election Commission figures, 1,302 candidates, including 136 women, are contesting the final phase, which covers 19 constituencies reserved for Scheduled Castes and two for Scheduled Tribes. Sashastra Seema Bal forces have been roped it to tighten security in districts bordering Nepal, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand untill polling ends.

Eleven ministers are in the fray in the final phase, including Bijendra Prasad Yadav (Supaul) and Prem Kumar (Gaya Town), each seeking a ninth consecutive term.

Other prominent contestants include Renu Devi, Nitish Mishra, Leshi Singh, and Mohammad Zama Khan.


DECISIVE ROUND
Polling will be held from 7 am to 6 pm on Tuesday, though it will end an hour early in select booths
Total seats 122
GENERAL: 101
SC: 19
ST: 2
Total booths- 45,399
(40,073 booths are in rural areas)
1,303 Total candidates
136 Total women candidates
Total voters 3,70,13,556
Women voters 1,74,68,572
Male voters 1,95,44,041
New voters in the total voters 5,28,954

Guj ATS thwarts suspected ISIS-K ricin terror plot, doc among 3 held

DILIP SINGH KSHATRIYA
@ Ahmedabad

THE Gujarat Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) thwarted a chilling terror plot to unleash mass casualties in the state using ricin and arrested three suspected Islamic State operatives from the state's Gandhinagar and Banaskantha districts.

The first of the three to be arrested was Dr Ahmed Mohyuddin Syed, a Hyderabad-based MBBS graduate who studied in China. Syed, the alleged mastermind of the plot, had allegedly begun synthesising a deadly poison from cyanide and ricin, a lethal toxin that can be used as a biological weapon.

According to ATS Deputy Inspector General Sunil Joshi, intelligence inputs indicated that Syed entered Gujarat to execute a terror strike under the ISIS-K or ISKP (Islamic State Khorasan Province) banner. Multiple ATS teams were mobilised to track him down. The team intercepted a silver Ford Figo on the Ahmedabad-Mehsana highway. Inside, they found Syed with two Glock pistols, one Beretta pistol, 30 live cartridges, and four litres of castor oil, a precursor to ricin poison. Police said Syed's interrogation revealed transnational links.

The three suspects arrested by the Gujarat Anti-Terrorism Squad | PTI

He reportedly confessed to receiving instructions from Abu Khadija, an Afghan-based ISKP handler with Pakistani contacts. He had also procured raw materials and lab equipment to produce chemical toxins. Joshi said the digital evidence on Syed's phone confirmed his research into ricin production.

The probe widened after authorities traced a number found on Syed's device to Banaskantha, where two other suspects, Azad Suleman Sheikh and Mohammad Suhail, both from Uttar Pradesh, were nabbed. ATS sources said the duo had procured foreign-made weapons from Hanumangarh in Rajasthan and hidden them in a graveyard near Kalol in Gandhinagar for Syed to collect. Before he could retrieve them, the ATS intervened.

The tiger was tranquilised by forest officials at Moleyur range of Saragur taluk late on Saturday night. It had injuries on its neck caused by a snare (in circle)

Tiger suspected to have killed farmer captured

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Mysuru

FOREST officials captured a male tiger, aged around 12-13 years, in the Moleyur forest range of Sargur taluk late on Saturday night. This is suspected to be the big cat that killed farmer Chowda Nayaka two days earlier.

After Nayaka (35) was mauled to death near the Nugu dam at Hale Heggudilu village on Friday, foresters had launched an intense combing operation using thermal drones to trace the tiger.

Around 4 pm on Saturday, the team located the tiger around 750 metre from where Nayaka's partially eaten body had been found. As the drone approached, the tiger moved into thick bushes, and the officials kept a close watch. Around 5.30 pm, the tiger emerged, and the foresters noticed a snare around its neck which could have been placed by poachers. Following its pugmarks, the team tracked the animal to a spot nearly a kilometre away.

2 elephants drown

Two wild elephants drowned while crossing the backwaters of Harobele reservoir in Kanakapura taluk of Bengaluru South district | **P6**

Wildlife veterinarian Dr Wasim Mirza, mounted on camp elephant Rohith, veterinarian Dr Adarsh on elephant Bhima and DRFO Ranjan on another elephant worked together to block the tiger's path and prevent it from entering nearby villages.

At 11.07 pm, veterinarian Dr Ramesh fired a tranquilising dart and within minutes, the tiger was sedated. **CONTINUED ON: P4**

2 gangsters detained in Georgia, US

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

TWO wanted Haryana gangsters, Venkatesh Garg and Bhanu Rana, have been detained in Georgia and the United States, respectively, and are expected to be deported to India soon, a top police official told this newspaper.

"A team of Haryana police is already in Georgia to bring back fugitive Venkatesh Garg, while deliberations are ongoing to bring back Bhanu Rana from the US," the official said.

Venkatesh Garg is associated with the Kapil Sangwan alias Nandu gang and hails from Narayangarh in Haryana. More than 10 criminal cases have been registered against him. He fled to Georgia after being implicated in the murder of a Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) leader in Gurugram. He has been operating an extortion racket and recruiting youth from the state as well as from Rajasthan and Delhi, into his criminal network, sources said.

Meanwhile, the other gangster, Bhanu Rana, a close associate of the notorious Lawrence Bishnoi gang from Karnal, has been operating across Haryana, Punjab and Delhi. His name surfaced during investigations into a grenade attack in Punjab earlier this year. In June, when the Special Task Force in Karnal arrested two men carrying hand grenades and pistols, they reportedly confessed that they were acting on Rana's orders.

New video shows convicts dancing; Dr G to meet officials

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru / Davangere

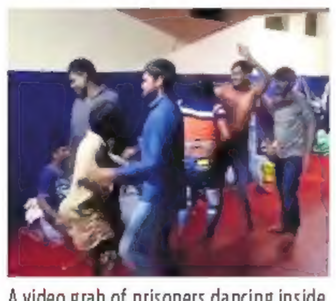
AFTER videos of preferential treatment to some prisoners and security lapses at Bengaluru Central Prison in Parappana Agrahara went viral on Saturday, Home Minister G Parameshwara called a meeting with prison officials on Monday.

Meanwhile, another undated video surfaced on Sunday showing inmates enjoying themselves inside the jail by consuming alcohol and dancing to beats created using available items such as plates and drums. Officials are yet to confirm whether the video was shot recently.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah told reporters in Davanagere that strict action will be taken against those found guilty and measures will be implemented to ensure such incidents do not recur. "The officer concerned had gone on leave. The home minister has called a meeting tomorrow (Monday) to discuss the issue," he said.

Parameshwara told reporters in Bengaluru that when similar incidents occurred earlier in Mangaluru, Belagavi and Bengaluru prisons, officials were suspended.

"But such incidents are happening repeatedly here (in Bengaluru). We have appointed B Dayananda as the head of prisons. He was on leave yesterday, but I have spoken to him. I told him that action should be taken against whoever responsible, be it the superintendent or lower-level staff and a report filed," Parameshwara said. **P6**



A video grab of prisoners dancing inside the Bengaluru Central Prison

RSS identified as a body of individuals, says Bhagwat

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

IN a veiled remark against Congress leaders criticising RSS for operating without registration, RSS Sarsanghchalak Dr Mohan Bhagwat on Sunday said his organisation is recognised as a body of individuals.

"RSS was established in 1925, so do you expect us to have registered with the British government," Bhagwat asked, replying to a question during an in-house question and answer session organised by RSS.

After Independence, the Government of India did not make registration compulsory, he said. "We are categorised as a body of individuals, and we are a recognised organisation," Bhagwat explained.

Asked whether Muslims are allowed in the Sangh, he clarified that anyone can join the shakha irrespective of religion, as all are sons of Bharat Mata. The Sangh identifies individuals as Hindus beyond denominational lines. "Individual identities -- be it Brahmin, Muslim, or Christian -- are dissolved in the shakha," he said. The Sangh's outreach focuses on enabling neglected sections to uplift their own communities, as Sangh's core work is shakha and man-making to make individuals self-reliant.

He said Bharat can become Hindu Rashtra "tomorrow morning" if 1.4 billion people take a collective decision. "Hindu rashtra is the essence of Bharat's identity and strength which means harmony, equality and unity, not domination. It reflects the cultural foundation that holds the country together," he said on the concluding day of the two-day lecture series on Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's centenary.

Obliquely referring to Pakistan, he said that whenever the neighbouring country has tried to harm Bharat, it has hurt itself. "Bharat always desires peace. Whenever Pakistan attacks, we must give it a befitting reply."

Appreciating India's foreign policy, he said it has managed to strike a balance with China. **CONTINUED ON: P5**

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat addresses '100 Years of Sangh Journey: New Horizons' event, in Bengaluru on Sunday | PTI

'Can be a Hindu Rashtra tomorrow if people wish'

India can become Hindu Rashtra "tomorrow morning" if 1.4 billion people take a collective decision, Bhagwat said. "Hindu rashtra is the essence of Bharat's identity, which means harmony, equality and unity, not domination"

CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM

World runs out of excuses as UN's 30th climate conference kicks off in the Amazon

SOUMYA SARKAR @ Belém (Brazil)

IN Belém, the tropical rain drifts in from the river and settles over a city of fishing boats and mango trees. The quiet streets of the city, known in Brazil as the Amazon's capital, will over the next two weeks be a microcosm of the world as nearly 200 national delegations arrive for COP30, the UN's 30th climate conference. The Amazon's gateway city will once again find itself at the centre of a global reckoning.

The UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2025 warns that planet-warming greenhouse gases are still rising, with global emissions 7% higher than in 2020. Despite countless promises, the world's heating trajectory remains unchanged. "Current policies will reduce projected 2030 emissions by only 2% compared with last year's estimates," says the UN Environment Programme. "The path to a liveable future gets steeper by the day," UN Secretary-General António Guterres has reminded governments. "But this is no reason to surrender. It's a reason to step up and speed up."

Finance, the other side of the climate equation, looks equally fragile. The Baku-to-Belém Roadmap, unveiled ahead of the summit, sets a target of $1.3 trillion a year in global climate funding by 2035, with $300 billion to be channelled from wealthy nations to poorer countries. Yet, actual flows are scarcely a tenth of what is required. That shortfall, more than any speech or declaration, will shape the outcome of COP30.

A decade after the Paris Agreement was adopted, implementation continues to lag. The UN's 2025 report on national climate plans shows most countries have updated their commitments, but the combined effect still points to higher emissions by 2030, about 9% above 2010 levels. The State of Climate Action 2025 finds that none of the key sectors such as energy, transport, industry and agriculture is cutting emissions fast enough to bend the global curve.

For developing economies, progress depends on money that has not arrived. The $100-billion annual pledge, first made in 2009, was fulfilled only in 2023. India's case shows the scale of the challenge. According to a CEEW (Council on Energy, Environment and Water) study, achieving net-zero emissions by 2070 would require around $10 trillion in investment. Without low-cost international finance, the transition could stall long before it gathers pace. **CONTINUED ON P9**

Karnataka to get AI-enabled plaint generation system soon

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @Bengaluru

HAVE you ever struggled to write a complaint letter to government authorities on water supply, power connection, bad roads or even government schemes? Come December, writing such letters to any government department would be easy.

The Centre for e-Governance Karnataka is developing an Artificial Intelligence-Enabled Grievance Redressal System where one needs to provide only the basic information and the system generates the letter and sends it to the authorities concerned. A complainant can also just give oral instructions and utter a few key words for the system to write the letter. It will be available in both Kannada and English.

The system is still "work under progress". However, there is an integrated Public Grievance Redressal System (iPGRS) that has been functioning since 2021 through which one can raise complaints using the website. Here, one should enter basic details of the complainant, including the name, place, phone number and then look for the department to raise the complaint.

"In the existing system, one has to select the department to raise a complaint. In some cases, people would not know which department to approach, though they have a genuine problem. In the new AI-enabled system, one needs to give just the basic information of the complainant and key words like water supply disruptions for how many days, power cuts, bad roads, money not being credited under schemes and such. **P5**